
City of Reading City Council
Public Hearing
Restricting Rental Housing in
R-1, R-1A and R-2
Wednesday, March 18, 2009
Council Chambers
5:15 p.m.

Vaughn D. Spencer, President of Council, called the hearing to order at 5:15 p.m.

Purpose

Council President Spencer announced that the purpose of the hearing is to obtain input on the proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance that will place restrictions on rental uses in the City's low density residential zones, R-1, R-1A and R-2.

Attendance

Council President V. Spencer
Councilor S. Fuhs
Councilor S. Marmarou
Councilor M. Goodman-Hinnershitz
Councilor D. Sterner
Councilor M. Baez
City Clerk Linda Kelleher
City Solicitor C. Younger

Council President Spencer explained the format of the hearing and advised those registered to address Council about the public address rules listed on the agenda.

Testimony from City Staff

No one from City staff was present to testify.

Public Comment

Paul Hoh, of Hampden Blvd., described the growing quality of life problems caused by the increase in rental properties in the City's low density residential zones. He stated that the proposed ordinance addresses the use of property not the ownership of property. He stated that this ordinance is needed to prevent single family properties

from converting to rental uses that cause serious quality of life problems in low density residential zones. He stated that currently 10% of the properties in R-1 and R-1A are rental and 25% of the properties in R-2 are rental. He stated that residents in these neighborhoods fully support the enactment of the ordinance. He expressed the belief that this ordinance will work to increase the owner occupied use of these residential properties. He encouraged Council to enact this ordinance.

Chuck Liedike, Government Affairs Director for the Reading Berks Association of Realtors, expressed the belief that the City's current ordinances, such as the housing permit ordinance, the property maintenance code and the roommate housing ordinance, etc., provide ample restriction on rental uses. He expressed the belief that a property owner should be able to use his private property as he wishes. He also expressed the belief that the ordinance is unfair as it limits rentals to not more than one every 800 feet.

Council President Spencer adjourned the hearing as no further comment was offered.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk